

March 22, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**HEARING ON RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASE FOR THE JUNIOR  
LIFEGUARD PROGRAM (ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD, ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY  
OF THE CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, AFTER THE PUBLIC  
HEARING:**

1. Approve a \$46 increase to the Junior Lifeguard Program fee from \$340 to \$386.
2. Find that the purpose of this increase is to meet expanding operational expenses of the Junior Lifeguard Program.

**PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

In June 1978, your Board directed that the Junior Lifeguard Program be self-sustaining through fees paid by participants. Since then, the program fee has been increased several times to ensure compliance with this policy. Therefore, we are recommending a fee increase to fully recover direct program costs for uniforms, program equipment, and instructor salary and employee benefit increases.

### **JUSTIFICATION**

The proposed Junior Lifeguard Program fee reflects a complete accounting of direct employee costs (salary and employee benefits), uniforms, and program equipment costs. The fee reflects increased direct costs for the program exclusive of overhead. Overhead has traditionally been absorbed by the District and the General Fund on a pro-rata basis, and we are recommending the continuation of this practice which has been approved by your Board in the past. The fee methodology has been reviewed and approved by the Auditor-Controller.

Given the benefits of teaching water safety skills to our youth, this program's proposed fee balances the need for cost recovery with the desire to maximize participation. There were a total of 2,320 paid participants in the summer of 2004, and we are estimating that 2,320 to 2,350 participants will be attracted to the six-week program in the summer of 2005. The total program costs will be approximately \$896,000.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

None. Direct program costs are fully offset by fees paid by the participants.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Junior Lifeguard Program has been offered by the County of Los Angeles for the past 44 years. The program teaches beach safety and physical fitness to boys and girls from 9 to 17 years of age for six weeks during the summer. Each participant in the program receives a swimsuit or trunks, a T-shirt with the junior lifeguard logo, and a one-year subscription (three issues) of "American Lifeguard" magazine.

A full-time ocean lifeguard specialist, one seasonal ocean lifeguard specialist, four seasonal supervisors, two student workers, and sixty instructors (ocean lifeguards) comprise the program's staff. This staff instructs junior lifeguards in ocean lifesaving techniques, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid skills, environmental concerns, ocean safety, and ocean and beach sports. In addition to the improved personal ocean proficiency and health provided to every junior lifeguard, the optional Cadet Program provides additional lifeguard skills, training, and experience for veteran junior lifeguards planning to become professional lifeguards or pursue other career opportunities related to the marine environment.

The only requirement for participation in the Junior Lifeguard Program is the ability to swim. Concerted efforts are made to attract youth from minority groups and from areas outside the coastal communities. Financial aid funded by program fees, in addition to community donations, will continue to ensure qualified youth can participate in the program regardless of their ability to pay.

The proposed fee increase is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Section 15061(b) (1) of the CEQA Guidelines because it is not a "project" subject to the act.

In compliance with Government Code Section 6062a and Section 66018, this request for approval of the increased fee will be made after all public notification and hearing requirements have been met.

### **STATUS OF PROGRAM SERVICES**

After realizing a 26% gain in participation from 1998 to 2002, the program's total enrollment has leveled off at about 2,350 participants during the last two years. The program's goals are to maintain safety and quality as well as to continue to broaden the diversity of its participants. The program's outreach efforts have traveled well beyond the coastal communities, providing education on ocean safety, and information regarding the Junior Lifeguard Program throughout Los Angeles County.

The Junior Lifeguard program outreach continues to focus on three areas:

1. The inclusion of program sites with beaches more accessible to non-beach community residents. Cabrillo, Santa Monica, El Segundo, and Venice are beaches with freeway access, which reduces transportation time.
2. The dissemination of Junior Lifeguard Program information through the Lifeguard Division's Public Education Program.
3. The cooperative effort with the Department of Beaches and Harbors Water, Awareness, Training, Education, and Recreation (W.A.T.E.R.) Program.

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

After several lean budget years, this year's Public Education Program (Fiscal Year 2004/2005) will begin to return to its prior levels, with visits to approximately 50 schools throughout the County of Los Angeles, providing education and information to potentially 35,000 students. In addition, the Public Education Program will continue to participate in career and safety events, safety service fairs, the Los Angeles County Fair, and expositions in conjunction with other County entities.

### **FEE INCREASE FACTORS**

There are five main points concerning the Junior Lifeguard Program fee increase.

1. The Junior Lifeguard Program fee has remained the same since 2003 despite program cost increases. Employee benefits have increased over 12% during the past two fiscal years and employee salaries are set to rise 2.5% in Fiscal Year 2005-06; therefore the program fee must be raised in order to fully recover direct program costs and continue to be self-sustaining as mandated.
2. In order to replace outdated and worn equipment, continue to provide a high quality uniform and various program supplies, and purchase enough new equipment to safely accommodate the large number of program participants, the Services and Supplies Budget for the program should be \$130,000.
3. In order to effectively manage a Junior Lifeguard Program averaging 2,350 children, provide adequate supervision of 60 instructors, and ensure participant safety, the current budgeted and dedicated Junior Lifeguard Program positions must be maintained.
4. The requested fee increase from \$340 to \$386 for Fiscal Year 2005-06 maintains the Los Angeles County Junior Lifeguard Program as the most cost-effective program for one of its size, as surveyed along the California coastline. Programs in Newport Beach cost participants \$495 to \$575 (non-resident) for eight (8) weeks; San Diego, \$325 for four (4) weeks; and Seal Beach, \$470 for seven (7) weeks.
5. Parents of participants continue to request that the program be maintained at the traditional six (6) week length as long as the local schools schedules permit. Without a fee increase to \$386, program days may have to be cut in order to avoid a program cost overrun. Many parents have indicated a preference of a fee increase over a loss of overall program days.

### **FINANCIAL AID**

Financial aid awards are allocated to qualifying participants based on family income and number per household, regardless of district affiliation. Financial aid funds for the 2005 Junior Lifeguard Program will be set at \$45,000. Every family that applied for financial aid last year was provided financial assistance (see attached).

**ON-GOING CONTRACTING PROCESS**

Not applicable.

**CONCLUSION**

Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, please instruct the Executive Officer to return adopted copies of this letter to:

1. Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman  
Los Angeles County Consolidated Fire Protection District  
1320 N. Eastern Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90063
2. Mike Frazer, Chief Lifeguard  
Los Angeles County Consolidated Fire Protection District  
Lifeguard Division  
2300 Ocean Front Walk  
Venice, CA 90291-4317

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Michael Freeman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN

PMF:cg

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Auditor-Controller  
Beaches and Harbors

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
PROPOSED FEE INCREASE

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Board of Supervisors regarding a fee increase to the Los Angeles County Junior Lifeguard Program, effective summer 2005. Even with this increase the fee will be well below the fees of many other junior lifeguard programs in Southern California. The fee increase will accommodate rising staffing costs, preserve the equipment and scholarship budgets, maintain a safe student to instructor ratio, and retain the full number of program days available. If the proposed fee increase is not adopted, the Junior Lifeguard Program schedule for 2005 will have to be reduced to meet the cost-recovery requirement mandated by the Board of Supervisors. The Los Angeles County Fire Department Lifeguard Division supports the proposed fee increase to maintain this premier community beach/ocean safety program.

In compliance with Government Code Section 6062a and Section 66018, this request for approval of the increased fee will be made after all public notification and hearing requirements have been met.

Said hearing will be held on March 22, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., in the Hearing Room of the Board of Supervisors, Room 361, Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street (corner of Temple Street and Grand Avenue) Los Angeles, California 90012.

The Board of Supervisors will consider and may adopt the fee schedule. Further, notice is given that the Board of Supervisors may continue this hearing from time to time.

Written comments may be sent to the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors at the above address. If you do not understand this notice or need more information please call (310) 939-7214.

Si no entiende esta noticia o si necesita mas informacion favor de llamar a este numero (310) 939-7214.

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY JUNIOR LIFEGUARD PROGRAM

## PARTICIPANTS AND FINANCIAL AID BY DISTRICT

District 1*			District 2		District 3		District 4		District 5*		Total Part.	Total on FA
YEAR	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	per year	per year
1997	14	n/a	122	n/a	304	n/a	1273	n/a	12	n/a	1725	n/a
1998	12	n/a	109	n/a	322	n/a	1422	n/a	27	n/a	1892	n/a
1999	13	13	121	51	353	20	1430	19	26	7	1943	110
2000	21	14	113	21	474	7	1626	42	24	2	2259	86
2001	36	14	120	24	530	13	1664	33	34	2	2411	86
2002	14	11	141	41	472	16	1699	54	33	2	2360	124
2003	27	20	187	48	544	20	1601	49	2	1	2316	138
2004	37	34	117	40	477	21	1674	51	9	2	2320	148

### DISTRICT TOTALS

District 1*			District 2		District 3		District 4		District 5*		Total Part.	Total on FA
	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	Total Part.	# on FA	( 8 years)	( 6 years)
	174	106	1030	225	3476	97	12389	248	167	16	17226	692

### 8 YEAR AVERAGE OF PARTICIPATION - 6 YEAR AVERAGE OF FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS

District 1*			District 2		District 3		District 4		District 5*		Total Part.	Total on FA
	22	18	129	38	435	16	1549	41	21	3	2153	115

\*There are Junior Lifeguard Programs available at Santa Fe Dam (District 1) and Castaic Lake and Bonelli Park/Puddingstone Lake (District 5). The availability of these programs reduces the number of participants our Program gets from those Districts.

Note: Every child that needed financial assistance was provided some support.